



# **CENTRAL COAST REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD**

## **BRIEF ISSUE DESCRIPTIONS**

**FOR THE**

**2009**

## **TRIENNIAL REVIEW OF THE WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN FOR THE CENTRAL COAST BASIN (BASIN PLAN)**

***April 2009***

**CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
CENTRAL COAST REGION**

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Documents also available at:

[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/publications\\_forms/publications/basin\\_plan/triennial\\_review/](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/publications_forms/publications/basin_plan/triennial_review/)

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**Brief Issue Descriptions**  
**for the**  
**2009 Triennial Review of the Water Quality Control Plan for the**  
**Central Coast Basin (Basin Plan)**  
**Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Coast Water Board) is conducting the 2009 Triennial Review the Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coast (Basin Plan). The last Triennial Review was completed in September 2005. The Central Coast Water Board's Triennial Review will identify those issues that are considered a priority for addressing through Basin Plan amendment projects. Staff has identified a preliminary list of Basin Planning issues for consideration in the upcoming Triennial Review. The purpose of this list is to encourage input from interested parties to assist staff in prioritizing Basin Plan amendment projects that will best address the water quality needs of the Central Coast Region.

In California, water quality standards include designated beneficial uses for surface and groundwaters, narrative or numeric water quality objectives to protect those beneficial uses, and a provision to protect high quality waters from degradation to the minimum level allowed by the objectives (i.e., antidegradation). Basin Plans also include implementation plans for water quality objectives, consisting of various regulatory programs. Basin Plans fulfill statutory requirements for water quality planning in California Water Code (CWC) section 13240 and the federal Clean Water Act (CWA) section 303(c). Both state and federal laws mandate the periodic review and update of basin plans. Federal law [CWA section 303(c)(1)] requires that a State's water quality standards be reviewed every three years.

The Basin Plan was initially adopted by the Central Coast Water Board in 1975, and has periodically been revised. The objective of the Basin Plan is to "show how the quality of surface and groundwaters in the Central Coastal Basin should be managed to provide the highest water quality reasonably possible" (Basin Plan, Chapter 1, Section I). Figure 1 below shows the geographic boundary of the Central Coast Region.

**Figure 1.** Central Coast (Region 3) Boundary



## CENTRAL COAST WATER BOARD VISION - HEALTHY WATERSHEDS

The Vision for the Central Coast Water Board is Healthy Watersheds. The Vision represents a framework for how we conduct business and achieve measurable results in water quality

improvement. The Vision structures our work towards our highest water quality priorities and more strategically aligns us with current and future challenges and opportunities in water quality.

Consistent with the Vision, the Central Coast Water Board has established the following measurable goals:

- **Healthy Aquatic Habitat** – By 2025, 80 percent of Aquatic Habitat is healthy, and the remaining 20 percent exhibits positive trends in key parameters.
- **Proper Land Management** – By 2025, 80 percent of lands within a watershed will be managed to maintain proper watershed functions, and the remaining 20 percent will exhibit positive trends in key watershed parameters.
- **Clean Groundwater** – By 2025, 80 percent of groundwater will be clean, and the remaining 20 percent will exhibit positive trends in key parameters.

Our intent is to prioritize Basin Plan amendment projects toward achieving our Vision and goals, and the greatest possible outcome for the Central Coast Region over the long term.

For additional information about the Central Coast Water Board's Vision process, please see the following website:

[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/publications\\_forms/publications/vision/index.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/publications_forms/publications/vision/index.shtml)

## **BASIN PLAN TRIENNIAL REVIEW PROCESS**

The federal Clean Water Act (Section 303(c)) requires states to hold public hearings for review of water quality standards at least once every three years. Water quality standards consist of beneficial use designations and water quality criteria (objectives) necessary to protect those uses. The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act requires the Water Board to review the entire Basin Plan periodically. While a major part of the review process consists of identifying potential problems, an important part of the review is the reaffirmation of those portions of the plan where no potential problems are identified.

The Basin Plan Triennial Review process includes a public workshop, a public comment period, and a public hearing. At the conclusion of the triennial review public hearing, Regional Water Board staff will prepare a Staff Report which will include a priority list of issues to be evaluated as Basin Plan amendments.

The priority list will identify primary issues that can be completed within existing resource allocations over a three-year period and a secondary list of issues requiring additional resources to complete. Placing an issue on the priority list will prompt Water Board staff to investigate the need for a Basin Plan amendment; it does not necessarily mean that a Basin Plan amendment will subsequently be made.

The last Triennial Review list had 14 proposed Basin Plan amendment projects. Four of those projects have been addressed or completed, leaving 10 issues or projects based on the 2005 Triennial Review list remaining to consider. In addition, staff proposed five new issues or projects to consider for the 2009 Triennial Review list.

For the 2005 Triennial Review list, staff projected that we could complete all 14 projects in the subsequent three years at the then available level of resources of about two personnel years and based on other Central Coast Water Board program priorities. Although staff completed

four projects (and also completed some data collection and preliminary analyses to support several additional projects), this level of effort was less than expected. Staff completed fewer Basin Plan amendment projects than expected from the 2005 Triennial Review Priority List because of staff losses and the realigning of programs and priorities associated with the Central Coast Water Board's Vision.

This experience will be informative for prioritizing the new list of projects, again, based on the current level of resources (still about two personnel years) and other Central Coast Water Board program priorities.

## **BASIN PLAN AMENDMENT PROCEDURE**

Once the Basin Plan Triennial Review process is complete, Water Board staff determines the need for a Basin Plan amendment. Basin Plan amendments can also occur for issues *not* identified during the Basin Plan Triennial Review. For example, amendments can occur for urgent issues to reflect new legislation. Basin Plan amendment hearings are advertised to the public in areas affected by the amendment or throughout the region. Basin Plan amendments do not become effective until approved by the Central Coast Water Board, the California State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board), and the California Office of Administrative Law. Surface water standards also require the approval of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to become effective.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND BASIN PLAN 2009 TRIENNIAL REVIEW SCHEDULE**

Public participation is an important part of the Triennial Review. The process includes a public workshop, a public comment period, and a public hearing. Water Board staff scheduled a public workshop for April 22, 2009. The purpose of the workshop is to provide information to and solicit comments from interested parties regarding the Basin Plan Triennial Review. In addition, interested parties also have an opportunity to submit written comments during the 45-day comment period from April 10, 2009 to May 26, 2009. Staff will incorporate public comments into a Staff Report and Prioritized List of Basin Plan Issues, and present that report to the Central Coast Water Board for approval at a subsequent public hearing, tentatively scheduled for July 2009.

Once the Prioritized List of Basin Plan Issues is adopted, staff will address each issue as a Basin Plan amendment project. As such, staff will develop a project charter and project workplan, in coordination with other Water Board activities and programs.

The tentative schedule for the 2009 Basin Plan Triennial Review is as follows:

Public comment period begins	April 10, 2009
Public workshop	April 22, 2009
Public comment period ends	May 26, 2009
Public Hearing & Board meeting	July 10, 2009

To obtain more information on scheduling and to download a Triennial Review Comment Form go to the Central Coast Water Board Triennial Review webpage at:  
[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/publications\\_forms/publications/basin\\_plan/triennial\\_review/index.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/publications_forms/publications/basin_plan/triennial_review/index.shtml)

## **BASIN PLAN ISSUE RANKING PROCESS AND PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA**

Resolution of Basin Plan Triennial Review issues may require the help of stakeholders, scientific research organizations, and other agencies, such as municipal discharge authorities, and USEPA. However, to give detailed attention to each issue concurrently, will likely far outstrip available personnel resources.

Central Coast Water Board staff will, therefore, use a ranking process to prioritize all potential Basin Plan amendment issues according to specific criteria. Each potential Basin Plan issue will be assigned a score between 1 (low rank) and 5 (high rank) for each of the criteria listed below. Assignment of these scores will be based on staff experience and input received during the public workshop and comment letters. The proposed ranking criteria are as follows:

- **Vision Alignment** - Does the issue align with the Central Coast Water Board's Vision and Measurable Goals (stated above)?
- **Water Quality Standards Improvement** - Will the issue improve water quality standards through new or revised beneficial uses or water quality objectives?
- **Effectiveness** - Will the issue advance water quality protection by improving clarity, consistency and coordination by staff and programs at the Central Coast Water Board?
- **Public Interest** - Does the issue have a high perceived public interest?

Staff will prioritize the potential issues by summing each criteria score into a final score ranging from zero (low priority) to 20 (highest priority). Staff may also consider other factors such as, geographic scope, resources already invested, and availability of additional resources. Staff will rank the potential issues from highest to lowest in relative importance for inclusion in the Triennial Review Priority List.

## **FORMAT FOR BASIN PLAN ISSUE DESCRIPTIONS**

Based on previous stakeholder comments, coordination with the statewide Basin Plan roundtable and a review of regulatory program needs, staff has prepared the following list of initial issue summaries for consideration in the upcoming triennial review. Staff has included newly identified Basin Plan issues, as well as issues identified during the 2005 Triennial Review. The purpose of this list is to encourage input from interested parties to assist Water Board staff in prioritizing potential Basin Plan amendment projects that will best address the water quality planning needs of the Central Coast Region. The public is encouraged to comment on these issues or any basin planning issue not previously identified.

For each issue presented below, Regional Water Board staff has listed a description of the issue and a preliminary recommendation. Each issue summary contains the following sections:



**Issue:**

A general topic descriptor for the issue.

**Discussion:**

A brief description of the issue, including a summary of previous public comments and progress made toward issue resolution, if appropriate.

**Type of Action:**

Identifies the type of regulatory action necessary to address or resolve the issue. Possible types of action are as follows:

- beneficial use amendment (new or revised);
- water quality objective amendment (new or revised);
- amendment to the implementation chapter of the Basin Plan;
- new or revised policy;
- water quality surveillance and monitoring amendment;
- editorial corrections or minor clarifications to the Basin Plan;

**Staff Recommendation:**

A preliminary recommendation from Regional Water Board staff for action to be performed for the issue. Possible recommendations are as follows:

- Prioritize issue during the 2009 Triennial Review;
- Remove issue from 2009 Triennial Review;
- Issue partially completed. Prioritize issue during 2009 Triennial Review;
- Issue completed. Remove from 2009 Triennial Review;

Newly identified Basin Plan issues, as well as issues identified during the 2005 Triennial Review are described in the following section.

## BRIEF ISSUE DESCRIPTIONS

### **Part I. Issues Identified in the 2005 Triennial Review**

#### **Issue 1: Shellfish Beneficial Use Designation**

***Discussion:***

Review and revise waterbodies designated for shellfish harvesting (SHELL) beneficial use in Basin Plan Table 2-1 "Identified Uses of Inland Surface Waters." A number of small coastal lagoons are identified as supporting shellfish as a beneficial use; however, no harvestable shellfish species are known to utilize these habitats.

This issue was included in the 2005 Triennial Review Priority List (Surface Water 5a).

At the March 24, 2006 meeting of the Central Coast Regional Board, a resolution was adopted to remove the shellfish harvesting beneficial use from Watsonville Slough and its tributaries. Similarly, at the March 21, 2008 meeting of the Central Coast Regional Board, resolutions were approved to remove the shellfish harvesting beneficial use for the San Lorenzo River Estuary and the Soquel Lagoon. Staff is currently reviewing the results of a study of the Salinas Lagoon are to determine the feasibility of removing the shellfish harvesting beneficial use from that water body.

***Type of Action:***

Beneficial Use Revision

***Staff Recommendation:***

Issue partially completed. Prioritize issue during 2009 Triennial Review. In coordination with the State Water Board, continue assessing all coastal lagoons within region to determine if the shellfish harvesting beneficial use is appropriate.

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#### **Issue 2: Groundwater Basin Configurations Update**

***Discussion:***

Update groundwater basin configurations in Basin Plan Table 2-3 and Figure 2-2 using new groundwater reference materials, including the 2003 Department of Water Resources Bulletin No.118 and the San Luis Obispo County Paso Robles groundwater basin study.

This issue was included in the 2005 Triennial Review Priority List (Groundwater 1).

Some progress was made on this issue by staff since the last Triennial Review, but no Basin Plan Amendments have been proposed.

***Type of Action:***

Beneficial Use Revision

**Staff Recommendation:**

Prioritize this issue during the 2009 Triennial Review.

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**Issue 3: Biostimulatory Substances Objective Revision****Discussion:**

Eutrophication results from a complex interaction of multiple nutrients, sunlight, substrate, water velocity, and other factors. Consequently, the Central Coast Basin Plan narrative objective for biostimulatory substances is as follows:

*Waters shall not contain bio-stimulatory substances in concentrations that promote aquatic growths to the extent that such growths cause nuisance or adversely affect beneficial uses.*

Understanding how to manage surface waters for biostimulation is complex, as interactions and effects of excessive nutrients are not always readily apparent. For example, a site that has excessive concentrations of phytoplankton or other algae may not display elevated concentrations of dissolved nutrients, as the nutrients may have already been taken up by plant material. This interplay of chemical, physical, and biological factors complicates assessment of overall water quality.

The Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program (CCAMP) has developed a “Biostimulatory Risk Index” to serve as a screening tool to simultaneously consider factors which serve as stimuli (nutrients), in parallel with those which act as responders (algal and plant cover, pH, dissolved oxygen and water column chlorophyll concentrations). The index is intended to characterize both in-situ monitoring site response to biostimulatory substances and the capacity of monitoring site water quality parameters to induce adverse biostimulatory responses in downstream areas.

Staff is advancing efforts to develop a region-wide, numeric, biostimulation objective that will address the issue of nuisance conditions and impacts to aquatic life. The numeric biostimulation objective will further supplement the existing narrative biostimulation objective and should be consistent with federal Regional Technical Advisory Group (RTAG) and State Regional Technical Advisory Group (STRTAG):

- Revise the narrative biostimulatory substances objective, replace with numeric objective(s). Assign the numeric objective to protect specific beneficial uses.

In conjunction with this effort, additional water quality objectives for specific nutrients or nutrient-loading indicators should be added to the Basin Plan:

- Ammonia
- Nitrite
- Nitrate
- Organic Nitrogen
- Phosphate
- Chlorophyll a

Finally, various water quality objectives related to biostimulation in Chapter 3 of the Basin Plan need reevaluation or revision:

- Dissolved Oxygen
- Temperature
- Turbidity
- pH

This issue was included in the 2005 Triennial Review Priority List (Surface Water 1).

***Type of Action:***

Water Quality Objective Amendment

***Staff Recommendation:***

Prioritize this issue during the 2009 Triennial Review.

New or revised water quality objectives may need to be developed independently prior to the development of the numeric biostimulation objective and/or related pollutant specific objectives.

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#### **Issue 4: Bacteria Objectives Revision, *Enterococcus* in Saline Waters**

***Discussion:***

Revise existing bacteria objectives to incorporate an *Enterococcus* objective for water contact recreation in enclosed bays and estuaries (saline waters). The Basin Plan currently has objectives only for total coliform.

This issue was included in the 2005 Triennial Review Priority List (Surface Water 5b).

***Type of Action:***

Water Quality Objective Amendment

***Staff Recommendation:***

Prioritize this issue during the 2009 Triennial Review.

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#### **Issue 5: Bacteria Objectives Revision, *E. coli* in Freshwater**

***Discussion:***

Revise existing bacteria objectives to incorporate an *E. coli* objective for water contact recreation in surface waters.

This issue was included in the 2005 Triennial Review Priority List (Surface Water 5c).

Note: the State Water Resources Control Board held two CEQA scoping meetings on statewide bacterial objectives for water contact recreation in fresh waters on October 2008.

***Type of Action:***

Water Quality Objective Amendment

***Staff Recommendation:***

Prioritize this issue during the 2009 Triennial Review.

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**Issue 6: Bacteria Objectives Revision, Fecal coliform Shellfish Harvesting**

***Discussion:***

Revise existing bacteria objectives to incorporate a fecal coliform objective for commercial shellfish harvesting in enclosed bays and estuaries (saline waters).

This issue was included in the 2005 Triennial Review Priority List (Surface Water 5d).

At the March 21, 2008 meeting of the Central Coast Water Board, resolutions were approved to remove the shellfish harvesting beneficial use for the San Lorenzo River Estuary and the Soquel Lagoon.

***Type of Action:***

Water Quality Objective Amendment

***Staff Recommendation:***

Issue completed. Remove from 2009 Triennial Review.

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**Issue 7: Revision and/or Clarification of Groundwater Objectives**

***Discussion:***

Chapter 3 of the Basin Plan contains selected objectives for all groundwater (Section II.A.4) and for specific groundwater basins (Section II.A.5). The water quality objectives in Section II.A.5, established for specific groundwater basins, should be expanded to all groundwater basins.

Develop a region-wide salts policy (also consider water softener use policy)

This issue was included in the 2005 Triennial Review Priority List (Groundwater 2a, 2b).

Additional water quality objectives are needed for groundwaters, including a toxicity objective.

***Type of Action:***

Water Quality Objective Amendment. Policy.

***Staff Recommendation:***

Separate into separate issues: (1) Expanded groundwater quality objectives applicable to all groundwater basins and (2) establish a region-wide salts policy. Prioritize both issues during 2009 Triennial Review.

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## **Issue 8: Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Management**

### ***Discussion:***

Revise Basin Plan Section VIII.D.2.b. "On-site Wastewater Management Plans" to require management by local permitting agencies of onsite wastewater treatment systems. The Basin Plan encouraged local permitting agency management as an option for onsite wastewater disposal in unsewered areas.

This issue was included in the 2005 Triennial Review Priority List (Surface Water 6).

On May 9, 2008, the Central Coast Water Board approved a Basin Plan amendment for onsite wastewater system criteria. On March 20, 2009, The Board approved a Basin Plan amendment to add a general conditional waiver of waste discharge requirements for onsite wastewater systems when they are installed and operating in an area with a local permitting agency management plan.

The State Water Board has proposed statewide Onsite Wastewater Regulations (Septic Tanks), including a statewide waiver of waste discharge requirements, under AB 885. A draft environmental impact report (EIR) was released and State Water Board staff are planning to propose final rules to the State Water Board by August 2009.

### ***Type of Action:***

Implementation/Policy

### ***Staff Recommendation:***

Issue completed. Remove from 2009 Triennial Review. If statewide regulations are promulgated, amend Basin Plan appropriately.

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## **Issue 9: Oil Field Soil Storage and Disposal**

### ***Discussion:***

On September 9, 2005 the Central Coast Water Board adopted Resolution No. R3-2005-0013 [Repeal Basin Plan Resolution No. 73-05 and Section 5(f) of Basin Plan Resolution No. 89-04 for the Reuse of Petroleum Wastes throughout the Central Coast Region].

This issue was included in the 2005 Triennial Review Priority List (Surface Water 3).

### ***Type of Action:***

Policy

### ***Staff Recommendation:***

Issue Completed. Remove from 2009 Triennial Review.

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## **Issue 10: Oil Field Soil Beneficial Reuse**

### ***Discussion:***

On September 9, 2005 the Central Coast Water Board adopted Resolution No. R3-2005-0013 [Repeal Basin Plan Resolution No. 73-05 and Section 5(f) of Basin Plan Resolution No. 89-04 for the Reuse of Petroleum Wastes throughout the Central Coast Region].

This issue was included in the 2005 Triennial Review Priority List (Surface Water 4).

### ***Type of Action:***

Policy

### ***Staff Recommendation:***

Issue Completed. Remove from 2009 Triennial Review.

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## **Issue 11: Nonpoint Source Management and Riparian Corridor Protection**

### ***Discussion:***

This two part issue would require (1) a revision of region-wide nonpoint source management measures and (2) the development of a riparian corridor protection policy.

The State Water Board approved the “Policy for Implementation and Enforcement of the Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program” on May 20, 2004. This policy was subsequently approved by the California Office of Administrative Law on August 27, 2004. This action addressed the first part of this issue.

The second part of this issue will be described in the new issue section of this document (Issue 16 – Riparian Buffer Zone Protections).

This issue was included in the 2005 Triennial Review Priority List (Surface Water 7).

### ***Type of Action:***

Policy

### ***Staff Recommendation:***

Remove from 2009 Triennial Review.

Proceed with editorial Basin Plan amendment that will update all portions of the Basin Plan that reference the outdated 1988 Nonpoint Source Management Plan, including Appendix A-10. Instead, the Basin Plan should reference the 2004 statewide Policy for Implementation and Enforcement of the Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program.

Consider riparian buffer zone protections in Issue 16, below.

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## Issue 12: Tributary Rule

### ***Discussion:***

Do beneficial uses apply to upstream tributaries? Surface waters within the Region that do not currently have beneficial uses specifically designated for them in Table 2-1 are assigned the following default designations:

- Municipal and domestic water supply
- Protection of both recreation and aquatic life.

Some Regional Water Boards (e.g., the Central Valley Region), however, have established a “tributary rule” which designates the beneficial uses of upstream water bodies with the same beneficial uses in downstream waters. Tributary rule language for the Central Valley Region Basin Plan is as follows:

*“The beneficial uses of any specifically identified water body generally apply to its tributary streams, except as provided below...”*

Adoption of a tributary rule by the Central Coast Water Board would necessitate a revision of all designated beneficial uses in Table 2-1.

This issue was included in the 2005 Triennial Review Priority List (Surface Water 8).

### ***Type of Action:***

Policy

### ***Staff Recommendation:***

Prioritize this issue during the 2009 Triennial Review.

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## Issue 13: NPDES Time Schedule

### ***Discussion:***

The Basin Plan does not have a discussion or guidance on the issuance of time schedules for National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) compliance.

This issue was included in the 2005 Triennial Review Priority List (Surface Water 9).

The State Water Board adopted Resolution No. 2008-0025 “Policy for Compliance Schedules in National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permits” on April 15, 2008.

### ***Type of Action:***

Policy



***Staff Recommendation:***

Issue completed *at State level*. Remove from 2009 Triennial Review. Reference to the State Compliance Policy will be included as part of the editorial Basin Plan revisions in Issue 14, below.

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**Issue 14: Comprehensive Basin Plan Editorial Revisions**

***Discussion:***

As necessary, revise and eliminate outdated paragraphs, tables, figures, references to outdated Policies, and appendices in the Basin Plan. Create maps of water body location as part of the beneficial uses Table 2.1. This includes update of references (e.g. Title 22, CTR, etc.). Incorporate amendments adopted since 1994.

This issue was included in the 2005 Triennial Review Priority List (Surface Water 2).

The last comprehensive compilation of the Basin Plan is the September 8, 1994 edition. Basin plan amendments made after 1994 are available as inserts to the September 8, 1998 edition on the Regional Water Board's website. A new comprehensive edition of the Basin Plan incorporating all previous amendments is needed. Once the comprehensive Basin Plan edition is made it should be posted on the Regional Water Board Basin Plan website. This will benefit all users of the Basin Plan.

***Type of Action:***

Editorial

***Staff Recommendation:***

Prioritize this issue during the 2009 Triennial Review.

## **Part II. New Basin Plan Triennial Review Issues**

### **Issue 15: Groundwater Recharge Area Protection**

#### ***Discussion:***

Consistent with the Vision of Healthy Watersheds, a Basin Plan amendment is needed to develop land use guidelines and/or prohibitions for the purpose of protecting groundwater recharge areas within the Central Coast Region.

#### ***Type of Action:***

Implementation/Policy

#### ***Staff Recommendation:***

Prioritize this issue during the 2009 Triennial Review.

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### **Issue 16: Aquatic Habitat Protection / Riparian Buffer Zone Protections**

#### ***Discussion:***

Building upon the efforts of statewide and regional riparian and wetland policies and consistent with the Vision of Healthy Watersheds, amend the Implementation Plan chapter of the Basin Plan to ensure protection of aquatic habitat and riparian areas. To achieve this goal, staff may also need to amend the Basin Plan present and potential beneficial uses and water quality objectives chapters to provide the basis for requiring amendments to the Implementation Plan chapter.

#### ***Type of Action:***

Beneficial use amendment (new or revised).  
Water quality objective amendment (new or revised).  
Implementation/Policy.

#### ***Staff Recommendation:***

Prioritize this issue during the 2009 Triennial Review.

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### **Issue 17: Aquatic Life Protection**

#### ***Discussion:***

The Basin Plan currently contains several narrative water quality objectives that protect aquatic life beneficial uses, for example, **turbidity** (*waters shall be free of changes in turbidity that cause nuisance or adversely affect beneficial uses*, III-3, first sentence) and **toxicity** (*all waters shall be maintained free of toxic substances in concentrations which are toxic to, or which produce detrimental physiological responses in, human, plant, animal, or aquatic life*).

Staff has initiated studies through the development of numeric targets in Total Maximum Daily Loads and through the Central Coast Ambient Monitoring Program (CCAMP) to determine numeric indicators that could be adopted as numeric water quality objectives. As an illustration, scientific literature can provide nitrate concentrations that produce adverse, toxic effects in fish and frogs. These nitrate concentrations could be used to numerically express water quality objectives that are currently narrative in the Basin Plan.

***Type of Action:***

Water quality objective (new or revised)

***Staff Recommendation:***

Prioritize this issue during the 2009 Triennial Review.

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**Issue 18: Watershed Protection**

***Discussion:***

To ensure the protection of watersheds in the Central Coast Region, an amendment of the Basin Plan Implementation Plan chapter is needed. This amendment will require local municipalities to base development and resource management plans on protecting watersheds.

***Type of Action:***

Implementation/Policy

***Staff Recommendation:***

Prioritize this issue during the 2009 Triennial Review.

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**Issue 19: Vision Framework**

***Discussion:***

An amendment of the Basin Plan is needed to formally incorporate the Central Coast Water Board's Vision of Healthy Watersheds, associated measurable goals, and data assessment and management methodology to support tracking progress toward achieving these measurable goals. It may be appropriate to address this issue as part of the Watershed Management Initiative (WMI) Chapter of the Basin Plan.

***Type of Action:***

Implementation/Policy  
Water Quality Surveillance and Monitoring

***Staff Recommendation:***

Prioritize this issue during the 2009 Triennial Review.

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